

I can attest to the quality of the learning experience that Saginaw Valley State provides its students, because I received a bachelor's degree from SVSU in criminal justice in 1977 while I was a Michigan State Trooper. As a returning adult student who also worked full time as a Trooper, it was particularly important to me to have accomplished professors and to be enrolled in classes that were academically challenging but also geared to practical accomplishment in the real world.

SVSU was chartered as a private college on November 13, 1963. In 1965 it was made part of Michigan's system of state supported colleges. The first class of ten students graduated in 1966.

That small but dedicated graduating class led the way for student enrollment that had grown to more than 8,000 students by the end of the millennium. International students by the hundreds now walk the campus.

SVSU is known for its programs in teacher education, an engineering program that is well-recognized in the area's automotive serving industries, programs in nursing and allied health sciences, business administration and the humanities, to name just some of the university's successful curriculum efforts.

In the past ten years, the university campus has grown by leaps and bounds, adding Founders Hall and the West Complex with its Performing Arts Center, Rhea Miller Recital Hall, Groening Commons, new classrooms and faculty offices, as well as conference facilities. Curtiss Hall, the new Herbert Dow Doan Science Building and the Student Center and Fitness Center were all completed. A Regional Education Center, the Zahnow Library addition, additions to the Marshal M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum and to student housing also were dedicated in 2003.

It would be understandable if the faculty, staff, students, alumni and supporters of Saginaw Valley State University took a moment to rest on their laurels, but my understanding is that all of the new facilities and programs are instead powerful motivation for the SVSU learning community to continue to grow and to seek excellence in all its endeavors.

I heartily congratulate everyone involved in the dramatic success of Saginaw Valley State University. As an alumnus of SVSU, I take personal pride and pleasure in its forty years of achievement.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me in offering congratulations to Saginaw Valley State University on its fortieth anniversary.

MOROCCAN KING COMMENDED FOR HIS CALL FOR WOMEN'S EQUALITY

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 7, 2003

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call your attention to the following column which ran in the Washington Post last month. Women's rights are a critical component of any nation's development, and I commend Morocco's King Mohammed VI for his call to improve the status of women in his nation.

[From the Washington Post, Oct. 16, 2003]

A KING'S APPEAL

(By Jim Hoagland)

Western democracies won the Cold War by shaking open closed societies and exposing their failures and crimes to citizens who then refused to go on living that way. The great political challenge of today is to induce similar change in Arab nations and other Islamic countries that do not respect the rights and dignity of their own citizens.

Think of it as collateral repair: The coming wave of epochal change must also be driven by internal forces, with restrained but committed support from abroad. The ultimate goal is reform within Islam conceived and carried out by Muslim leaders, scholars and civic groups, substantively welcomed by the West.

And that reform must begin with the role and rights of women in the Islamic world. A question posed last week in as important a speech as I have read recently makes that unblinkingly clear:

"How can society achieve progress while women, who represent half the nation, see their rights violated and suffer as a result of injustice, violence and marginalization, notwithstanding the dignity and justice granted them by our glorious religion?"

The irrefutable logic about the high cost of institutionalized gender discrimination was voiced by Morocco's King Mohammed VI last Friday at the opening of Parliament in Rabat. He then outlined far-reaching changes in family and divorce laws for the kingdom that would effectively lessen the intrusive reach of religious authorities into gender issues.

I am aware that speeches are given in the Arab world, as well as in Washington, to postpone or avoid the actions they describe. And in fairness to the globe's 1.2 billion Muslims, it has to be noted that all religions have been used at some point as a tool of control by unscrupulous political and religious leaders, and misogynists of all stripes—as Islam is used today far too often.

But Mohammed VI outlined highly specific remedies and committed both his religious and political authority to getting them enacted. And he repeatedly invoked the language of the Koran to denounce the unfairness of polygamy, marriage contracts, guardianships and divorce laws as they are practiced in his country and by implication elsewhere in the Muslim world.

As befits a 40-year-old monarch whose followers call him "the Commander of the Faithful" and who claims descent from the prophet Muhammad, the king argued that solutions can and should be found in Islam. But his words also implicitly acknowledged that Islam has been deformed into an instrument of repression in much of the Arab world and elsewhere.

Consider this: Two-thirds of all illiterate Arab adults are women, who are kept out of schools by custom, lack of resources and, in many places, by determined opposition from religious authorities. The Moroccan king took aim at a sickness that deprives many Islamic societies of the talents and productive labor of half their populations.

Morocco perches on the North African Atlantic shoulder of the Arab world. The immediate, direct consequences of Mohammed VI's words in Egypt, Saudi Arabia and elsewhere may be slight. (They went largely unreported in the United States as well.) But the king's embrace of this cause represents both catalyst and reflection of broader change that is rapidly bearing down on the region.

It is part generational change as aging autocrats give way to younger leaders. Change is also being stirred by the deposing

of a uniquely evil regime in Iraq, a thunder-clap that is reverberating throughout the region, and by the pressures of the shadow war being fought between global terrorists and the U.S.-led coalition.

Mohammed VI's speech makes clear that he was not intimidated by the bombings in his country last May carried out by Islamic fundamentalists tied to al Qaeda. Nor does he seem cowed by the reactionary religious establishments that have contributed so much to the backwardness and turmoil now evident in Islamic nations.

An effective reform movement is straining to be born. In the same week the Moroccan king spoke, the Nobel Committee awarded the 2003 peace prize to Shirin Ebadi, an Iranian lawyer who leads the fight in her country for women's rights and democracy—two causes that cannot be separated in the Islamic world. This is a good example of collateral repair: restrained but focused Western encouragement of reform.

Mohammed VI provides a standard to which Arabs, Iranians, Pakistanis and others can and should be held. They are not being asked to live up to Western standards by improving the opportunities and lives of "their" women. This is a descendant of the prophet, not Gloria Steinem, who is telling them that they must change or fall ever deeper into self-destructive decline.

VETERANS DAY 2003 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 7, 2003

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support of America's 25 million living veterans. Our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines are surely the best of the best.

More than 48 million heroic men and women have served in our military since the start of the Republic. Veterans have served this great Nation honorably during times of peace, and of war. It is appropriate that we set aside one special day a year to honor their service. However, we must not reserve this day for remembrance and then forget our veterans the other 364 days a year. Daily, we owe veterans our heartfelt gratitude and respect.

As the Congresswoman representing Florida's third district, I am proud of the patriotism and loyalty that the people of Florida have shown to this Nation—it inspires me daily as a senior member of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs. There are nearly two million veterans in the state of Florida, and I thank them each for answering the call to service.

At this time, more than any other, we should stop and pay homage to America's veterans. Today's servicemember is tomorrow's veteran. Right now, there are 130,000 Americans serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom. On Thursday, the Administration announced a plan that would send 128,000 fresh troops to Iraq early next year. This plan calls-up 43,000 National Guard and Reserve troops for one-year tours. We need to promise these servicemembers that they will not be forgotten when they return home.

Congress needs to take action and fully fund concurrent receipt for the 560,000 eligible veterans. It is the right thing to do. We must promise this generation of career service

members that they will be treated on par with other federal employees in the event that they become disabled. A recent study, undertaken by the United States House of Representatives Committee on Government Reform, shows that the Disabled Veterans Tax affects approximately 57,300, or one in three, veterans in Florida. 2,738 veterans are affected by this tax in the third district of Florida. Statewide, Florida's veterans lose \$300 million in benefits annually to the Disabled Veterans Tax. In Florida's third district, veterans cumulatively lose \$13,923,588 in benefits a year—with an average loss of \$5,085 per veteran annually.

The Bush Administration argues that there is a cost barrier to fully funding concurrent receipt. This argument shows where the Administration's priorities are misplaced. If we can come up with an \$87.5 billion supplemental appropriation for the war in Iraq, then we can surely find the money to bring our Nation's military retirees on par with the rest of federal employees. We cannot say that we have enough money to fight wars, but not enough to compensate the servicemembers injured in them.

This year's budget process shows why we need mandatory funding for VA health care. The funding system for veterans' health care is seriously flawed. Instead of being based on need or costs like other federal health programs it is funded based on residual funding for discretionary programs. Veterans are paying for this defective funding system with curtailment in enrollment in the VA health care system, newly proposed copayments and enrollment fees, and increased waiting times. VA does well with the funding it receives, but with a stable and reliable funding stream, it could provide better access to high-quality care for our veterans.

It appears that the House will agree to the Senate's provision that will provide a \$1.3 billion increase above the Administration's budget request. However, it will still fall short of the 2004 funding level that was promised in the budget resolution. Veterans should not have to come begging at our doors for adequate funding of the VA health care system.

Today, and everyday, we should honor those who have worn this Nation's uniform. I thank them and will continue to work to fulfill Abraham Lincoln's pledge, "to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and orphans."

HONORING WOMEN AIRFORCE SERVICE PILOTS

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 7, 2003

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, As Veterans' day approaches, I want to take the time to recognize the patriotism and sacrifice of a special group of women. I rise today to honor and recognize servicewomen who served as Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) during the Second World War.

The generation that defeated the Nazis has correctly been referred to as the "Greatest Generation." But for many years, the contributions of this select group of young women pilots were overlooked.

As the first women in history trained to fly American military aircraft, the WASP shattered traditional conceptions about women's roles and became pioneers, heroes, and role models for generations of women to come.

They compiled an admirable record, performing essential services that freed males for combat-related service overseas, but their accomplishments did not come without a cost. Thirty-eight members of the WASP made the ultimate sacrifice and lost their lives in the course of their service.

Although these women had answered the call to duty at America's time of greatest need, when the WASP were disbanded on December 20, 1944, they received no GI benefits or military honors.

America tried to forget them, leaving them with only their personal satisfaction that they had done their duty.

Congress finally corrected this wrong in 1977 when it formally recognized the service of members of the WASP as active military service, making them eligible for veterans benefits.

As we watch women serving bravely in the War Against Terror, it is safe to say that the future of women in the military seems assured. But it is important to remember that this was not always the case.

It is not an exaggeration that we owe a big part of the freedom we enjoy today to these women pilots. Their love of country and love of flying is something for which we will always be grateful.

At this time I would like to thank the thirty-eight who gave their lives. Let us remember Jane Champlin, Susan Clark, Margie L. Davis, Katherine Dussa, Marjorie D. Edwards, Elizabeth Erickson, Cornelia Fort, Frances Grimes, Mary Hartson, Mary H. Howson, Edith Keene, Kathryn B. Lawrence, Hazel Ying Lee, Paula Loop, Alice Lovejoy, Lea Ola McDonald, Peggy Martin, Marie N. Michell, Virginia Moffatt, Beverly Moses, Dorothy Nichols, Jeanne L. Norbeck, Margaret Oldenburg, Mabel Rawlinson, Gleanna Roberts, Betty Scott, Margaret J. Seip, Helen J. Severson, Marie Sharon, Evelyn Sharp, Betty P. Stine, Marion Toevs, Gertrude Tompkins, Mary Trebing, Bonnie Jean Welz, Betty T. Wood, and Mary L. Webster.

In these dangerous times, their courage is an inspiration for all Americans. I encourage everyone to learn more about the history of the service of these courageous women.

CONFERENCE REPORT H.R. 2691, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPRO- PRIATIONS ACT, 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 30, 2003

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I regrettably come to the floor in opposition to the Interior conference report that my friend from North Carolina and the Chairman of the Subcommittee, Mr. TAYLOR, worked so hard in putting together. There are many things in this conference report for which I'm very grateful. I'm grateful to the Chairman for working with me to give the Bureau of Indian Affairs the au-

thority to fund the first phase of the recommendations from the Chiloquin dam study, a critical effort in the Klamath Basin of southern Oregon to improve endangered sucker fish habitat and lighten the burden on agriculture. I also want to extend my sincere appreciation to the Chairman for funding PILT at \$227,500,000—one of its highest levels ever. While it is not the fully authorized level of \$360 million that I have been a staunch advocate for, it's much better than it has been in the past and the good Chairman and his top-notch staff are to thank for this. Finally, I want to commend the Chairman for his work in getting \$400 million included in the conference report to replenish the exhausted fire suppression accounts of the BLM and Forest Service, and I commend him for including almost \$2.5 billion to implement the National fire plan next year. These are significant accomplishments and I have enthusiastically supported them.

However, even with the inclusion of all these excellent provisions, I reluctantly must vote against the conference report because of the language included that undermines the efforts of my friend from California, the Chairman of the Resources Committee, to find a legislative solution to the complicated problem of tribal trust accounting. The language added to the conference report would interrupt the Department of the Interior's conduct of its historical accounting of individual Indian trust fund accounts, which is mandated by federal court order in *Cobell v. Norton*. The language would suspend any such accounting until either December 31, 2004 or until Congress revised the American Indian Trust Management Reform Act to limit this forensic accounting activity. The added language not only interferes with a court-required accounting for hundreds of thousands of Native Americans, but also seeks to force a potentially hasty decision on an exceptionally complex issue and overlooks an agreement reached between Chairman POMBO and Chairman TAYLOR during House floor consideration of this bill in July. That agreement stated that settlement of the Cobell matter would be left to Chairman POMBO's Resources Committee to resolve, the proper authorizing committee venue. Unfortunately, the conference report language does not comport with that agreement, and so I will reluctantly vote against this bill in its current form. I am hopeful that this provision can successfully be resolved in the correct legislative forum, and that the many other outstanding provisions of the Interior Appropriations bill developed under the fine leadership of Chairman TAYLOR remain intact.

TRIBUTE TO THE COLORADO TRIAL LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 7, 2003

Ms. DeGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the exceptional endeavors and notable undertakings of an extraordinary professional membership organization in the State of Colorado. It is both fitting and proper that we recognize this outstanding association for its leadership in government and the legal community and for its enduring service to the people of our state. It is to commend this distinguished organization that I rise to honor the